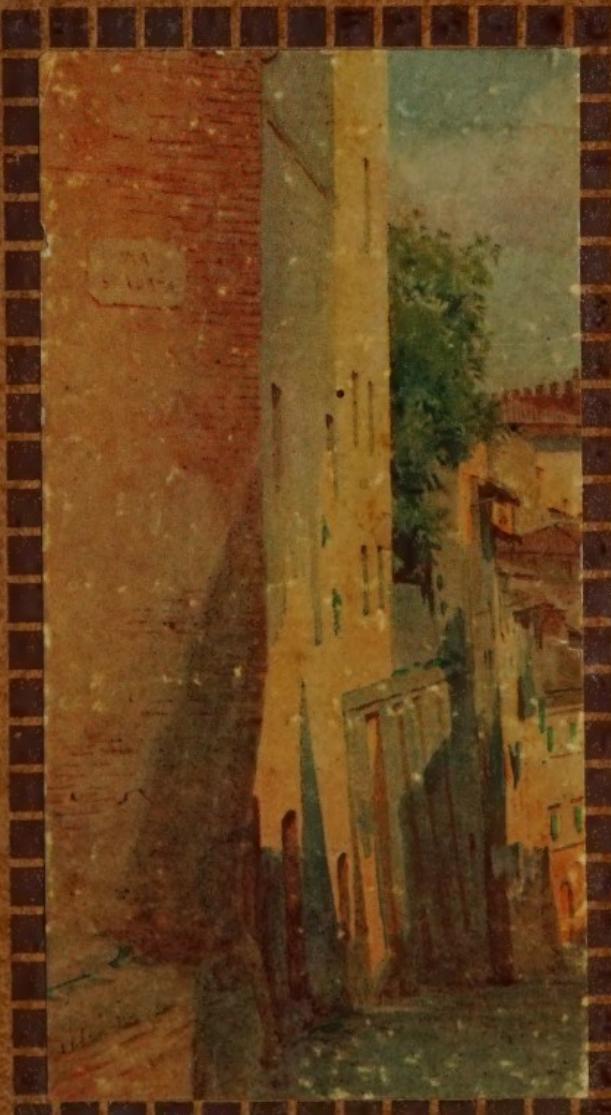


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from a
Canadian
Garden



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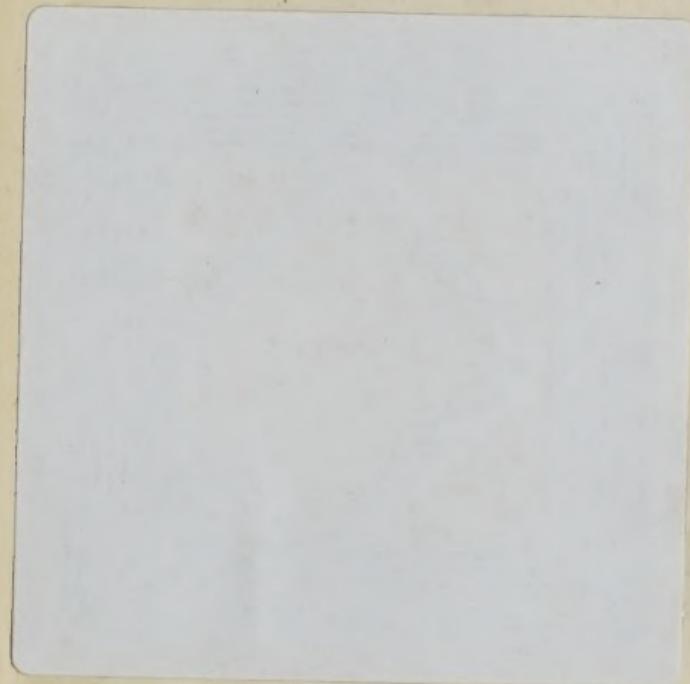
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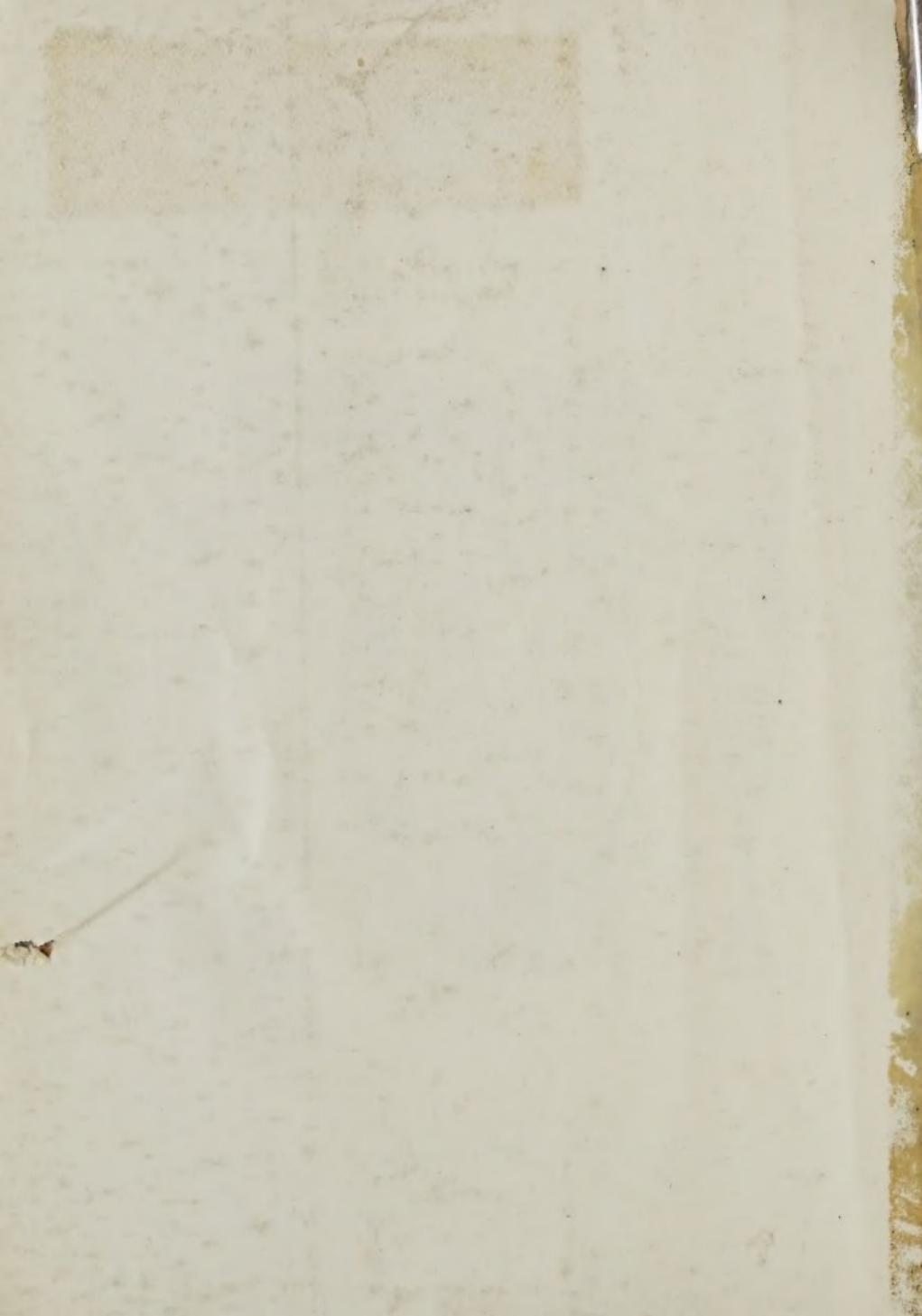
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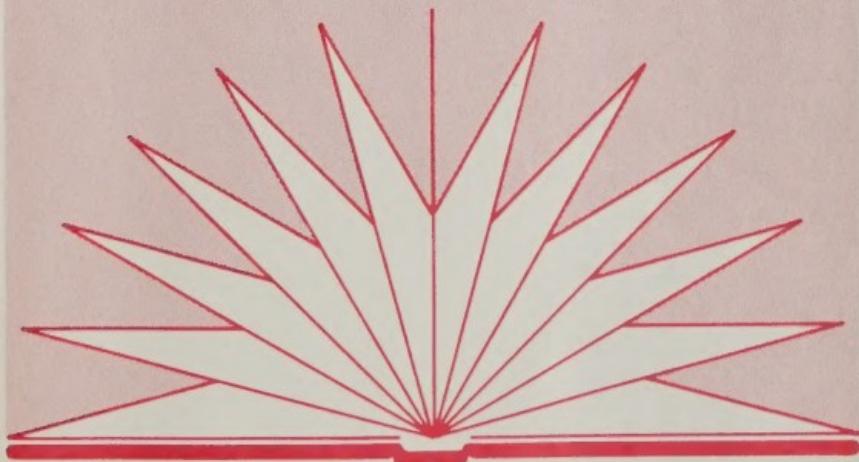
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CENTENNIAL GIFT OF

IVAN ZSAGNOR

FLOWERS FROM A
CANADIAN GARDEN

FLOWERS FROM A CANADIAN GARDEN

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

LAWRENCE J. BURPEE



TORONTO
THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY
LIMITED

*Entered at
Stationers Hall
1909*

PREFATORY NOTE

THIS little collection is not the first, nor does it profess to be the most complete, anthology of Canadian poetry. Nevertheless, the compiler feels that it may claim a modest place of its own. It is confined to short lyrics—a limitation which has its disadvantages, but also its advantages. In the case of a few Canadian poets, it is not possible to give a just idea of their value in such a collection as this ; but on the whole it is believed that, within its restricted limits, this anthology represents fairly enough the quality and character of Canadian poetry. The selection has been made with the utmost care, and includes the work of several new Canadian poets of promise, as well as verses from some of our early writers who deserve to be kept in remembrance.

For permission to include selections from
iii

Prefatory Note

their several works, the editor is indebted to the authors themselves, and also to the following publishers : Messrs. Morang & Company ; Little, Brown & Company ; The Fleming H. Revell Company ; Sherman, French & Company ; Small, Maynard & Company ; and Silver, Burdett & Company. He regrets exceedingly that, owing to his inability to secure the permission of the publishers, he has been compelled to omit selections from the poems of Charles Roberts ; and that, for the same reason, his selection from the works of Bliss Carman is confined to his earlier poems.

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Flowers from a Canadian Garden

THE KING'S GIFT

THE New Year coming to us with swift feet
Is the King's gift,
And all that in it lies
Will make our lives more rounded and
complete.

It may be laughter,
May be tear-filled eyes ;
It may be gain of love,
Or loss of love ;
It may be thorns, or bloom and breath of
flowers,

The full fruition of these hopes that move ;
It may be what will break these hearts of
ours,—

What matter ? 'Tis the great gift of the
King—

We do not need to fear what it may bring.

THE BARLEY FIELDS

THE sunset has faded, there's but a tinge,
Saffron pale, where a star of white
Has tangled itself in the trailing fringe
Of the pearl-grey robe of the summer night.

Oh! the green of the barley fields grows deep,
The breath of the barley fields grows rare ;
There is rustle and glimmer, sway and
sweep—
The wind is holding high revel there,

Singing the song it has often sung ;
Hark to the troubadour glad and bold :
“ Sweet is the earth when the summer is
young
And the barley fields are green and gold ! ”

MARGARET

HER eyes—upon a summer's day
God's skies are not more blue than they.

Her hair—you've seen a sunbeam bold
Made up of just such threads of gold.

Her cheek—the leaf which nearest grows
The dewy heart of June's red rose.

Her mouth—full lipped, and subtly sweet
As brier drowned in summer heat.

Her heart—December's chill and snow ;
Heaven pity me, who love her so !

WOMAN

Not faultless, for she was not fashioned so,
A mingling of the bitter and the sweet ;
Lips that can laugh and sigh and whisper low
 Of hope and trust and happiness complete,
Or speak harsh truths ; eyes that can flash
 with fire,
Or make themselves but wells of tenderness
Wherein is drowned all bitterness and ire—
 Warm eyes whose lightest glance is a
 caress.
Heaven sent her here to brighten this old
 earth,
And only Heaven fully knows her worth.

YOUTH AND JUNE

I WAS your lover long ago, sweet June,
Ere life grew hard ; I am your lover still,
And follow gladly to the wondrous tune
 You pipe on golden reeds to vale and hill.
I am your lover still ; to me you seem
 To hold the fragrance of the joys long
 dead,
The brightness and the beauty of the dream
 We dreamed in youth, to hold the tears
 we shed,
The laughter of our lips, the faith that lies
 Back in that season dear to every heart,
Life's springtime, when God's earth and
 God's blue skies
Are, measured by our glance, not far apart.

SHE

A woman who knows how to droop
 Her eyes before the world's bold gaze,
And teach, by silence, just how near
 That world dare venture to her ways.
A woman who knows how to lift
 Her eyes to mine without dismay—
For her innocence is might—
 And say that wrong is wrong alway,
That right and truth are right alway :
 Eyes, heaven-lit and clear, to-night
I'll take, if for my own I may,
 The creed you hold—the right !

REMEMBER THEE !

REMEMBER thee ! When I forget
Myself, and all that has been mine—
The moments more than precious yet,
The nights you wont to call divine—
When all that *is* hath ceased to be,
I then will cease to think of thee.

Still think of thee ! When summer's sun
Is wrapped in deep autumnal haze ;
When every sphere its course hath run,
And numbered its allotted days ;
When sun and stars have ceased to be,
I then will cease to think of thee.

Remember Thee !

Remember thee ! When love is nought ;
When truth is but an empty name ;
When Sorrow is the child of Thought,
And Sorrow's only offspring—Shame :
When Love, Truth, Thought have ceased to
be,
I then will cease—to think of thee !

MY FATE

Away and beyond that point of pines,
 Away in a spot where the glad grapes be,
Purple and pendant on verdant vines,
 That Fate of mine is awaiting me.

And if no more the wind blows true
 To waft me afar to that island sweet,
Beyond that greater and other blue
 I feel that I and my Fate shall meet.

For the hope that is can never fade,
 And the hope that is can never fall,
That Fate was law since the world was made,
 That it shall be law till the end of all.

My Fate

And Time may be long or it may be brief
Ere I stand on that dim and unknown
shore,
And grief or joy be mine ; but grief
Can dwell not there—where we meet
once more.

FIRST LOVE

Ah, love is deathless ! we do cheat
Ourselves who say that we forget
Old fancies : last love may be sweet,
First love is sweeter yet.

And day by day more sweet it grows
For evermore, like precious wine,
As Time's thick cobwebs o'er it close,
Until it is divine.

Grows dearer every day and year,
Let other loves come, go at will ;
Although the last love may be dear,
First love is dearer still.

WIND

I AM Wind, the deathless dreamer
 Of the summer world ;
Tranced in snows of shade and shimmer,
 On a cloud-scarp curled ;

Fluting through the argent shadow
 And the molten shine
Of the golden, lonesome summer
 And its dreams divine.

All unseen, I walk the meadows,
 Or I wake the wheat,
Speeding o'er the tawny billows
 With my phantom feet.

All the world's face, hushed and sober,
 Wrinkles where I run,
Turning sunshine into shadow,
 Shadow into sun ;

Wind

Stirring soft the breast of waters
With my winnowing wings ;
Waking the grey ancient wood from
Hushed imaginings.

Where the blossoms drowse in languors,
Or a vagrant sips,
Lifting nodding blade or petal
To my cooling lips ;

Far from gloom of shadowed mountain,
Surge of sounding sea,
Bud and blossom, leaf and tendril,
All are glad of me.

Loosed in sunny deeps of heaven,
Like a dream, I go,
Guiding light my genie-driven
Flocks, in herds of snow,

Ere I moor them o'er the thirsting
Woods and fields beneath,
Dream of parchèd death.
Dumbly yearning, from their burning

Wind

Not a sorrow do I borrow,
From the golden day,
Not a shadow holds the meadow
Where my footsteps stray.

Light and cool, my kiss is welcome
Under sun and moon,
To the weary vagrant wending
Under parchèd noon ;

To the languid, nodding blossom
In its moonlit dell,
All earth's children, sad and yearning,
Know and love me well.

Without passion, without sorrow,
Driven in my dream,
Through the season's trance of sleeping
Cloud and field and stream ;

Haunting woodlands, lakes and forests,
Seas and clouds impearled,
I am Wind, the deathless dreamer
Of the summer world.

SLEEP

SWEET, brief condition of oblivion,
Easer of careworn mind and sorrowed soul ;
Yea, next to death, God's most compassionate gift.

Thou art that short mortality wherein men
Give over their spirits to omnipotence,
That sea of faith whereon men launch their
barks,
Undoubting of the hope of their return.

The king, the galley-slave, are equal here,
The sinner and the saint alike have peace,
A short forgetting of the angered hour,
The poisoned memory, or the woe to be.

Within thy mighty halls of phantasy
Thine opiate silence hangs its curtains black
And ever the hideous dream is but a dream.

Sleep

'Tis sweet to rise to greet the kindling morn,
When all is happy, holy, glad, and well ;
But unto anguished spirit, life's remorse,
Time's prisoners of failure, earth's defeat,
'Tis agony to wake, to meet the sun.
For these, O Kind Magician, thou most
true,
Give these, life's weary, woe's poor suffering
ones,
Earth's mightiest blessing, dream-compelling
sleep.

RETURN NO MORE!

RETURN no more, O splendid sun,
Sweet days, come back no more ;
Bring back no more the budding hours,
The springtime to my door.

The calling bird, the wakening brook,
Make mock upon mine ear ;
For she who loved them with me then
Went out with yesteryear.

Fold, fold the year for aye in snows,
Howl, Winter, by my door ;
For she, my rose, my bloom of life,
Is snow for evermore.

EARTH

MYSTICAL ash of all being,
Tomb and womb of all time,
Healing, destroying, upbuilding,
Receiving, riving apart ;
Cool and warm for rest,
Or hot for burgeoning life ;
Clod, yet pulsate with being,
Infinite, ever recurring,
Dark, sad house of all joy.

Night that dawns in the bud,
Whose perfect day is the flower ;
Earth, red mantle of ruin,
Beautiful shroud of decay,
Marriage bed of the cosmos,
Love that gives and receives,
Nubian nurse of all beauty,
Swart, ultimate fondler of joy ;
Out of thy bosom all come,

Earth

Back to thy bosom return,
Where, in thy mystical chambers,
Purified, sifted, restored,
All life, dismantled, out-worn,
Obeys the inevitable law.

Red Egypt rose from thy dust ;
Greece, thine ineffable bloom,
Child of thy magical beauty,
Woke like a lotus at dawn.
All the sad might of the ages,
Their sad, fated beauty, their joy,
Their passionate hopes and despairs,
Arose from thy bosom, and back
To thy yearning bosom return.

And thou, swart Mother, O Wise !
Thou to thy children wert kind,
Thou smoothedst the saddest of brows,
Held to thy breast all lovers,
Folded their beauty of limb,
As thou dost fold to thy rest
Thy rarest and fairest of bloom.

Earth

And never undaunted spirit
Trod like a god thy rime,
But thou gavest him splendid rest,
Where in thy sepulchred chambers
Thy great imperishable sleep,
Those kings of thy heart's best joy.

THE SOUL'S BATH

At even, when the roseate deeps
 Of daylight dim from heaven's bars,
The soul her earth-worn garment slips,
 And naked stands beneath the stars ;

And there unto that river vast,
 That mighty tide of night, whose girth
With splendid planets, brimming past,
 Doth wash the ancient rim of earth,

She comes and plunges in ; and laves
 Her weariness in that vast tide,
That life-renewing deep, whose waves
 Are wide as night is wide.

Then from the pure, translucent flow
 Of that unplumed, invigorate sea,
God-like, in truth's white spirit-glow,
 She stands, unshamed and free.

THE HUMMING-BEE

Thou dream-like toiler of the fields,
Each honeyed spot thou knowest well
Where nature's heart her sweetness yields,
Some ruined trunk thy citadel.

At early morn, by breathing wood,
Or in some dewy clover dell,
Tuning the young day's solitude,
Self-musing, murmurous, musical,
Until the gradual shadows fall
At ruddy eve, when homeward come
The weary children of the day
And sounds of human toil grow dumb ;
Then, rocked on some glad blossom's breast,
Thou dreamest to rest.

When Summer wanes to Autumn's age,
And come the days of fate and rage,
O, happy humming-bee !

The Humming-Bee

Then wilt thou sink to wintry sleep
When storms are hoarse along the deep,
 In hushed tranquillity.

No more wilt wind thy subtle horn
By dreamy eve or misty morn.

 Ah me!—ah me!

Could we, like thee, go down the days
Of Summer hush to Autumn haze,
Housing, with what we built before,
The gold of all our memory's store

 And garnered thought:

So when the bleak December's hate
Beat round the bastions of our fate,
We, wrapt in wealth of honeyed dreams,
Of kindlier visions, far-off streams,

 Might heed it not.

THE GRAVEDIGGER

OH ! the shambling sea is a sexton old,
And well his work is done,
With an equal grave for lord and knave,
He buries them every one.

Then hoy and rip, with a rolling hip,
He makes for the nearest shore ;
And God, who sent him a thousand ship,
Will send him a thousand more ;
But some he'll save for a bleaching grave,
And shoulder them in to shore—
Shoulder them in, shoulder them in,
Shoulder them in to shore.

Oh ! the ships of Greece and the ships of Tyre
Went out, and where are they ?
In the port they made, they are delayed
With the ships of yesterday.

The Gravedigger

He followed the ships of England far,
As the ships of long ago ;
And the ships of France they led him a dance,
But he laid them all arow.

Oh ! a loafing, idle lubber to him
Is the sexton of the town ;
For sure and swift, with a guiding lift,
He shovels the dead men down.

But though he delves so fierce and grim,
His honest graves are wide,
As well they know who sleep below
The dredge of the deepest tide.

Oh ! he works with a rollicking stave at lip,
And loud is the chorus skirled ;
With the burly rote of his rumbling throat
He batters it down the world.

He learned it once in his father's house,
Where the ballads of old were sung ;

The Gravedigger

And merry enough is the burden rough,
But no man knows the tongue.

Oh ! fair, they say, was his bride to see,
And wilful she must have been,
That she could bide at his gruesome side
When the first red dawn came in.

And sweet, they say, is her kiss to those
She greets to his border home ;
And softer than sleep her hand's first sweep
That beckons, and they come.

Oh ! crooked is he, but strong enough
To handle the tallest mast ;
From the royal barque to the slaver dark,
He buries them all at last.

Then hoy and rip, with a rolling hip,
He makes for the nearest shore ;
And God, who sent him a thousand ship,
Will send him a thousand more ;

The Gravedigger

But some he'll save for a bleaching grave,
And shoulder them in to shore—
Shoulder them in, shoulder them in,
Shoulder them in to shore.

*

NOONS OF POPPY

Noons of poppy, noons of poppy,
Scarlet leagues along the sea ;
Flaxen hair afloat in sunlight,
Love, come down the world to me !

There's a Captain I must ship with
(Heart, that day be far from now !),
Wears his dark command in silence,
With the sea-frost on his brow.

Noons of poppy, noons of poppy,
Purple shadows by the sea ;
How should love take thought to wonder
What the destined port may be ?

Nay, if Love have Joy for shipmate
For a night-watch or a year,
Dawn will light o'er Lonely Haven,
Heart to happy heart, as here.

Noons of Poppy

Noons of poppy, noons of poppy,
Scarlet acres by the sea
Burning to the blue above them ;
Love, the world is full for me.

A SON OF THE SEA

I WAS born for deep-sea faring ;
I was bred to put to sea ;
Stories of my father's daring
Filled me at my mother's knee.

I was sired among the surges ;
I was cubbed beside the foam ;
All my heart is in its verges,
And the sea wind is my home.

All my boyhood, from far vernal
Bourns of being, came to me,
Dream-like, plangent, and eternal
Memories of the plunging sea.

A SEA CHILD

THE lover of child Marjory
Had one white hour of life brim full ;
Now the old nurse, the rocking sea,
Hath him to lull.

The daughter of child Marjory
Hath in her veins, to beat and run,
The glad, indomitable sea,
The strong white sun.

OUTBOUND

A LONELY sail in the vast sea-room,
I have put out for the port of gloom.

The voyage is far on the trackless tide,
The watch is long, and the seas are wide.

The headlands blue in the sinking day
Kiss me a hand on the outward way.

The fading gulls, as they dip and veer,
Lift me a voice that is good to hear.

The great winds come, and the heaving sea,
The restless mother, is calling me.

The cry of her heart is lone and wild,
Searching the night for her wandered child.

Beautiful, weariless mother of mine,
In the drift of doom I am here, I am thine.

Outbound

Beyond the fathom of hope or fear,
From bourn to bourn of the dusk I steer,

Swept on in the wake of the stars, in the
stream
Of a roving tide, from dream to dream.

IN THE GARDEN

THE roses blushed a deeper red,
The lilies looked more saintly,
The sweet-alyssum hung its head,
And smiled and frowned most quaintly ;
The daisies even, at my feet,
Were strangely knowing, strangely sweet.

The hollyhocks against the wall,
So serious and old-fashioned,
Were all astir, the larkspur tall
Seemed really quite impassioned.
I pondered, but I could not guess
What made their sudden consciousness.

Where'er I looked, their little eyes
Were eager, wise, and tender,

In the Garden

As if they had some new surprise
Or sympathy to render ;
But, turning round all unaware,
I saw that *she* was standing there !

INACTION

My giants are fair days and hours of ease,
Wherein I seem
Adrift upon a stream
Of luring, lulling phantasies
In some enchanted dream.

More to be welcomed were the battle-plain,
Where drum and fife
Call to the deadly strife,
For coward self may there be slain,
The hero brought to life.

CANDLE-FLAME

HAST singed thy pretty wings, poor moth ?
Fret not ; some moths there be
That wander all the weary night,
Longing in vain to see
The light.

Hast felt the scorching flame, poor heart ?
Grieve not ; some hearts exist
That know not, grow not to be strong,
And weep not, having missed
The song.

MATURITY

“ At life’s great feast,” they said to me,

“ The gods serve out the good wine first ;
Look to thy cups, drink heartily,
In early hour assuage thy thirst.”

Not so ! Though eagerly I quaffed,
Deeming it then well-spiced, good wine,
To me seems now that early draught
Of vintage human—this divine !

MOTHER-BORN

SINCE Fate hath given thee no child
To lie within thine arm,
That by its presence undefiled
Should keep thy soul from harm—

If thou wert truly mother-born
Thou wouldst have played the part,
And found some little one forlorn
To fold within thy heart.

OH! LOVE BUILDS ON THE AZURE SEA

Oh ! Love builds on the azure sea,
And Love builds on the golden strand,
And Love builds on the rose-winged cloud,
And sometimes Love builds on the land.

Oh ! if Love build on sparkling sea,
And if Love build on golden strand,
And if Love build on rosy cloud,
To Love these are the solid land.

Oh ! Love will build his lily walls,
And Love his pearly roof will rear
On cloud, or land, or mist, or sea—
Love's solid land is everywhere !

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY

A STAR leaned down and laid a silver hand
 On the pale brow of Death ;
Before it rolled bleak shadows from the land :
 The star was Faith !

Across wild storms that hid the mountain far
 In funeral cope,
Piercing the black, there sailed a throbbing
star—
 The red star, Hope !

From God's vast palm a large sun grandly
rolled
 O'er land and sea ;
Its core pure fire, its stretching hands of
gold—
 Great Charity !

“BITE DEEP AND WIDE, O AXE,
THE TREE !”

“BITE deep and wide, O Axe, the tree !
What doth thy bold voice promise me ? ”

“I promise thee all joyous things
That furnish forth the lives of kings ;

“For every silver ringing blow
Cities and palaces shall grow.”

“Bite deep and wide, O Axe, the tree !
Tell wider prophecies to me.”

“When rust hath gnawed me deep and red,
A nation strong shall lift his head.

“Bite Deep and Wide, O Axe”

“His crown the very heavens shall smite,
Æons shall build him in his might.”

“Bite deep and wide, O Axe, the tree !
Bright Seer, help on thy prophecy !”

THE LILY

WHITE Lady of the silvered lakes,
Chaste goddess of the sweet, still shrine,
 The jocund river fitful makes
 By sudden, deep-gloomed brakes,
Close sheltered by close warp and woof of vine,
Spilling a shadow gloomy-rich as wine
Into the silver throne where thou dost sit,
Thy silken leaves all dusky round thee knit !

Mild Soul of the unsalted wave,
 White bosom holding golden fire,
Deep as some ocean-hidden cave
 Are fixed the roots of thy desire,
Through limpid currents stealing up,
And rounding to the pearly cup.

 Thou dost desire,
With all thy trembling heart of sinless fire,
 But to be filled
 With dew distilled

The Lily

From clear, fond skies that in their gloom
Hold, floating high, thy sister moon,
Pale chalice of a sweet perfume.
Whiter-breasted than a dove,
To thee the dew is—love !

BABY'S DREAMS

I saw a fairy twine,
Of star-white jessamine,
A dainty seat, shaped like an airy swing,
With two round yellow stars
Against the misty bars
Of night ; she nailed it high
In the pansy-purple sky,
With four taps of her little rainbow wing.
To and fro
That swing I'll blow.
The baby moon in the amethyst sky
Will laugh at us as we float and fly,
And stretch her silver arms and try
To catch the earth-babe swinging by

FORGET-ME-NOT

COULD every blossom find a voice
And sing a strain to me,
I know where I would place my choice,
Which my delight should be.
I would not choose the lily tall,
The rose from musky grot,
But I would still my minstrel call
The blue Forget-me-not.

And I on mossy bank would lie,
Of brooklet, rippling clear ;
And she of the sweet, azure eye,
Close at my listening ear,
Should sing into my soul a strain
Might never be forgot,
So rich with joy, so rich with pain—
The blue Forget-me-not.

Forget-me-not

Ah ! every blossom hath a tale,
With silent grace to tell,
From rose that reddens to the gale
To modest heather-bell ;
But oh ! the flower in every heart
That finds a sacred spot
To bloom, with azure leaves apart,
Is the Forget-me-not.

Love plucks it from the mosses green
When parting hours are nigh,
And places it Love's palms between
With many an ardent sigh ;
And blearly up from grassy graves
In some loved churchyard spot
It glances tenderly and waves—
The dear Forget-me-not.

THE DEEPER NOTE

SOFT housed with Joy and sweet Content
He sang a measured lay ;
And marvelled that unmindful went
The world upon its way.

But one day, hand in hand, at last
Went Joy and sweet Content
From out his cot, where all the past
Of gladsome years was spent.

Then low he sang, with grief athrill,
To ease his sad heart's pain ;
And lo ! the busy world stood still,
Applauding every strain.

CHILDHOOD ALONE IS GLAD

CHILDHOOD alone is glad. With it time flees
In constant mimes and bright festivities.
It, like the ever-restless butterfly,
Or seeks or settles on some flower of joy.
Youth chases pleasure, but oft starteth pain ;
And love, youth's birthright, oft is love in
vain ;
While manhood follows wealth, or woos
ambition,
That are but courted cares ; and, with
transition
Insensible, he enters upon age ;
Thence gliding like a spectre from life's
stage,
E'en through the door of dotage. So he
passes
To second childhood ; but, as quickening
gases,

Childhood Alone is Glad

Being fled, leave zestless a once cheering draught,

We grow not merry though the dotard laughed.

SECRETS OF THE HEART

OPEN, my heart, thy ruddy valves ;
It is thy master calls ;
Let me go down, and, curious, trace
Thy labyrinthine halls.
Open, O heart, and let me view
The secrets of thy den ;
Myself unto myself now show
With introspective ken.
Expose thyself, thou covered nest
Of passions, and be seen ;
Stir up thy brood, that in unrest
Are ever piping keen.
Ah ! what a motley multitude,
Magnanimous and mean !

THE INFINITE

THE day was lingering in the pale north-west,
And night was hanging o'er my head—
Night, where a myriad stars were spread ;
While down in the east, where the light was
least,
Seemed the home of the quiet dead.
And, as I gazed on the field sublime,
To watch the bright, pulsating stars,
Adown the deep where the angels sleep
Came drawn the golden chime
Of those great spheres that sound the years
For the horologe of time.
Millenniums numberless they told,
Millenniums a millionfold
From the ancient hour of prime.

MORN

SEE how the morn awakes. Along the sky
Proceeds she with her pale, increasing light,
And, from the depths of the dim canopy,
Drives out the shadows of departing night.
Lo ! the clouds break, and gradually more
wide
Morn openeth her bright, rejoicing gates ;
And ever, as the Orient valves divide,
A costlier aspect on their breadth awaits.
Lo ! the clouds break, and in each opened
schism
The coming Phœbus lays huge beams of
gold,
And roseate fire, and glories that the prism
Would vainly strive before us to unfold ;
And, while I gaze, from out the bright abyssm
Sol's flaming disc is to the horizon rolled.

THE CAVERN OF NIGHT

'Tis solemn darkness ; the sublime of shade ;
Night, by no stars nor rising moon
relieved ;

The awful blank of nothingness arrayed,
O'er which my eyeballs roll in vain,
deceived.

Upward, around, and downward I explore,
E'en to the frontiers of the ebon air ;
But cannot, though I strive, discover more
Than what seems one huge cavern of
despair.

O Night, art thou so grim, when, black and
bare
Of moonbeams, and no cloudlets to adorn,
Like a nude Ethiop 'twixt two houris fair,
Thou stand'st between the evening and
the morn ?

I took thee for an angel, but have wooed
A cacodemon in mine ignorant mood.

BEYOND THE VEIL

How great unto the living seem the dead,
How sacred, solemn ; how heroic grown ;
How vast and vague, as they obscurely tread
The shadowy confines of the dim unknown !
For they have met the monster that we
dread,
Have learned the secret not to mortal
shown.

E'en as gigantic shadows on the wall
The spirit of the daunted child amaze,
So on us thoughts of the departed fall,
And with phantasma fill our gloomy gaze.
Awe and deep wonder lend the living lines,
And hope and ecstasy the borrowed beams ;
While fitful fancy the full form divines,
And all is what imagination dreams.

THE MYSTERY OF A YEAR

A LITTLE while, a year agone,
I knew her for a romping child,
A dimple and a glance that shone
With idle mischief when she smiled.

To-day she passed me in the press,
And, turning with a quick surprise,
I wondered at her stateliness,
I wondered at her altered eyes.

To me the street was just the same,
The people and the city's stir ;
But life had kindled into flame,
And all the world was changed for her.

I watched her in the crowded ways,
A noble form, a queenly head,
With all the woman in her gaze,
The conscious woman in her tread.

GOOD SPEECH

THINK not, because thine inmost heart means
well,
Thou hast the freedom of rude speech :
sweet words
Are like the voices of returning birds
Filling the soul with summer, or a bell
That calls the weary and the sick to prayer.
Even as thy thought, so let thy speech be fair.

THE ISLET AND THE PALM

O GENTLE sister spirit, when you smile
My soul is like a gentle coral isle,
An islet shadowed by a single palm,
Ringed round with reef and foam, but inly
calm.

And all day long I listen to the speech
Of wind and water on my charmèd beach :
I see far off, beyond mine outer shore,
The ocean flash, and hear his harmless roar

And in the night-time, when the glorious sun,
With all his life and all his light, is done,
The wind still murmurs in my slender tree,
And shakes the moonlight on the silver sea.

SNOWBIRDS

ALONG the narrow sandy height
I watch them swiftly come and go,
 Or round the leafless wood,
Like flurries of wind-driven snow,
Revolving in perpetual flight,
 A changing multitude.

Nearer and nearer still they sway,
And, scattering in a circled sweep,
 Rush down without a sound ;
And now I see them peer and peep,
Across yon level bleak and grey,
 Searching the frozen ground—

Until a little wind upheaves
And makes a sudden rustling there,
 And then they drop their play,
Flash up into the sunless air,
And, like a flight of silver leaves,
 Swirl round and sweep away.

MARCH

OVER the dripping roofs and sunk snow-barrows
The bells are ringing loud and strangely near,
The shout of children dins upon my ear
Shrilly, and like a flight of silver arrows
Shows the sweet gossip of the British sparrows,
Gathered in noisy knots of one or two,
To joke and chatter just as mortals do
Over the day's long tale of joys and sorrows ;
Talk before bedtime of bold deeds together,
Of theft and fights, of hard times and the weather,
Till sleep disarm them, to each little brain
Bringing tucked wings and many a blissful dream,
Visions of wind and sun, of field and stream,
And busy barnyards with their scattered grain.

PATERNITY

CHILD, for thy love and for thy beauty's sake,
My heart hath opened warmlier to the day;
Springs of new joy and deeper tears awake,
Whose wells were buried in the baser clay.

For thy sake nobler visions are unfurled,
Vistas of tenderer humanity,
And all the little children of this world
Are dearer now to me.

FOREST MOODS

THERE is singing of birds in the deep, wet woods,
In the heart of the listening solitudes,
Peewees, and thrushes, and sparrows, not few,
And all the notes of their throats are true.

The thrush from the innermost ash takes on
A tender dream of the treasured and gone ;
But the sparrow singeth with pride and cheer
Of the might and light of the present and here.

There is shining of flowers in the deep, wet woods,
In the heart of the sensitive solitudes.
The roseate bell and the lily are there,
And every leaf of their sheaf is fair.

Forest Moods

Careless and bold, without dream of woe,
The trilliums scatter their flags of snow ;
But the pale wood-daffodil covers her face,
Agloom with the doom of a sorrowful race.

A FORECAST

WHAT days await this woman, whose strange
feet

Breathe spells, whose presence makes men
dream like wine,

Tall, free, and slender as the forest pine,
Whose form is moulded music, through
whose sweet,

Frank eyes I feel the very heart's least beat,
Keen, passionate, full of dreams and fire ?

How in the end, and to what man's desire,
Shall all this yield ? whose lips shall these lips
meet ?

One thing I know : if he be great and pure,
This love, this fire, this beauty shall endure ;
Triumph and hope shall lead him by the
palm :

But if not this, some differing thing he be,

A Forecast

'That dream shall break in terror ; he shall
see
The whirlwind ripen, where he sowed the
calm.

GOLDENROD

ERE the stout year be waxèd shrewd and old,
And while the grain upon the well-piled
stack

Waits yet unthreshed, by every woodland
track,

Low stream, and meadow, and wide waste
out-rolled,

By every fence that skirts the forest mould,
Sudden and thick, as at the reaper's hail,
They come, companions of the harvest,
frail

Green forests yellowing upward into gold.

Lo, where yon shaft of level sunshine gleams
Full on those pendent wreaths, those
bounteous plumes

So gracious and so golden ! Mark them
well,

Goldenrod

The last and best from summer's empty
 looms,
Her benedicite, and dream of dreams,
 The fulness of her soul made visible.

WE TOO SHALL SLEEP

Not, not for thee,
Belovèd child, the burning grasp of life
Shall bruise the tender soul. The noise, and
strife,
And clamour of midday thou shalt not see ;
But wrapped for ever in thy quiet grave,
Too little to have known the earthly lot,
Time's crashing hosts above thine innocent
head,
Wave upon wave,
Shall break, or pass as with an army's tread,
And harm thee not.

A few short years
We of the living flesh and restless brain
Shall plumb the deeps of life and know the
strain,
The fleeting gleams of joy, the fruitless tears ;
And then at last, when all is touched and
tried,

We too shall Sleep

Our own immutable night shall fall, and
deep
In the same silent plot, O little friend,
Side by thy side,
In peace that changeth not, nor knoweth
end,
We too shall sleep.

UNTRODDEN WAYS

WHERE close the curving mountains drew
To clasp the stream in their embrace,
With every outline, shade, and hue
Reflected in its placid face,

The ploughman stops his team to watch
The train, as swift it thunders by ;
Some distant glimpse of life to catch,
He strains his eager, wistful eye.

His waiting horses patient stand
With wonder in their gentle eyes,
As through the tranquil mountain-land
The snorting engine onward flies.

The morning freshness is on him,
Just wakened from his balmy dreams ;
The wayfarers, all soiled and dim,
Think longingly of mountain streams.

Untrodden Ways

Oh for the joyous mountain air,
The long, delightful autumn day
Among the hills!—the ploughman there
Must have perpetual holiday!

And he, as all day long he guides
His steady plough with patient hand,
Thinks of the train that onward glides
Into some new, enchanted land,

Where, day by day, no plodding round
Wearies the frame and dulls the mind,
Where life thrills keen to sight and sound,
With plough and furrows left behind!

WHITENESS

DEAR white bird, into Sleepland fly ;
Sunset fades in the tender sky ;
Fair is day, but the gloaming's best,
And laughter is sweet, but sweeter rest,
 Dear white bird !

Dear white rose, in your garden set
With lad's-love bushes and mignonette,
Bend in slumber that tiny head ;
Night's best blessings are on you shed,
 Dear white rose !

Dear white heart, while you softly sleep
Watch may angels around you keep ;
Happy visions at set of sun
Come in dreams to my lovely one,
 Dear white heart !

THE HOUSE AMONG THE FIRS

A low grey house is set among the firs,
And softly night and winter wall it round ;
Among its garden-ways no creature stirs,
And from its frozen meadows breathes no sound.

But, ah, within those quiet walls what light !
Lamps globed like mimic moons, and fire-light's glow,
And eyes of childhood still with wonder bright
Above some fairy record bending low.

The mother gazes on the fire and builds
Dream's mighty architecture—Love knows how ;
And one beside her thinks how firelight gilds
Her hair, and shows the splendour of her brow.

The House among the Firs

Keep watch about it, Kindly Powers, and let
 No evil thing draw nigh that dear abode—
The low grey house of quiet, safely set
 Among its firs beyond the winding road

AT THE END OF THE ROAD

FAR in the height of the hills,
Toward the setting sun,
Nestle the homes our hearts shall reach
When the long day's work is done.
In the height of the hills of dream
They wait till the hills are won.

Sometimes, when Love makes clear
Life's inner vision fine,
Or music breathes its word
Of mystery half-divine,
Suddenly, out of the dusk,
We see their windows shine.

There, when the setting sun
The spirit with wonder fills,
When the good day's work is ended,
And the voice of welcome thrills,
We shall come to their shelter safe,
Far in the height of the hills.

THE IMMORTAL

BEAUTY is still immortal in our eyes.
When sways no more the spirit-haunted reed,
When the wild grape shall build
No more her canopies,
When blows no more the moon-grey thistle-
seed,
When the last bell has lulled the white flocks
home,
When the last eve has stilled
The wandering wing and touched the dying
foam,
When the last moon burns low, and, spark
by spark,
The little worlds die out along the dark,—

Beauty, that rosed the moth-wing, touched
the land
With clover-horns and delicate faint flowers,
Beauty, that bade the showers

The Immortal

Beat on the violet's face,
Shall hold the eternal heavens within their
place
And hear new stars come singing from God's
Hand.

THE SEA-WITCH

ENDLESSLY fell her chestnut flowers,
Faint snow throughout the honeyed dark.
The myrtle spread his boughs to drink
Deep draughts of salt from the sea's brink,
And like a moon-dial swung her tower's
Straight shadow o'er her warded park.

From her calm coasts the galleons fled,
The fisher steered him farther west.
No port was hailed, no keel came home
Across that pale, enchanted foam ;
But by her roof the thrushes fed
And wandering swallows found their rest.

The shadows touched her tenderly,
The red beam lingered on her dress ;
The white gull and the osprey knew
Her tower across the leagues of blue ;
The wild swan, when he sought the sea,
Was laggard through her loveliness.

TO ALCITHOË

IN your dim Greece of old, Alcithoë,
Death like a lover sought and crowned you
young,
Between the olive orchards and the sea.

When they had twined your myrtle buds,
and hung
The stately cypress at your door, they said,
“ Alcithoë is dead,
Before whose feet the flaming crocus sprung,
For whom the red rose opened ere the prime.
Those the gods love are taken before their
time.”

Ah ! why did no one, watching you alone,
Snare your dead beauty in undying stone—
The gold hair bound beneath its golden
band,

To Alcithoë

'The milk-white poppies closed within your
hand—
That the harsh world a little space might
keep
'The last, still, exquisite vision of your sleep ?

THE RIVER TOWN

THERE'S a town where shadows run
 In the sparkle and the blue,
By the river and the sun
 Swept and flooded through and through

There the sailor trolls a song,
 There the sea-gull dips her wing,
There the wind is clear and strong,
 There the waters break and swing.

But at night with leaden sweep
 Come the clouds along the flood,
Lifting in the vaulted deep
 Pinions of a giant brood.

Charging by the slip, the whole
 River rushes black and sheer,
There the great fish heave and roll
 In the gloom beyond the pier.

The River Town

All the lonely, hollow town
Towers above the windy quay,
And the ancient tide goes down
With its secret to the sea.

FOR REMEMBRANCE

IT would be sweet to think when we are old
Of all the pleasant days that came to pass,
That here we took the berries from the
grass,
There charmed the bees with pans, and
smoke unrolled,
And spread the melon nets when nights were
cold,
Or pulled the blood-root in the under-
bush,
And marked the ringing of the tawny
thrush,
While all the west was broken, burning gold.

And so I bind with rhymes these memories,
As girls press pansies in the poet's leaves
And find them afterwards with sweet
surprise ;

For Remembrance

Or treasure petals mingled with perfume,
Loosing them in the days when April
grieves—
A subtle summer in the rainy room.

A LITTLE SONG

THE sunset in the rosy west
 Burned soft and high ;
A shore-lark fell like a stone to his nest
 In the waving rye.

A wind came over the garden beds
 From the dreamy lawn,
The pansies nodded their purple heads,
 The poppies began to yawn.

One pansy said, “ It is only sleep,
 Only his gentle breath ” ;
But a rose lay strewn in a snowy heap,
 For the rose it was only death.

Heigho ! we’ve only one life to live,
 And only one death to die :
Good-morrow, new world ! have you nothing
 to give ?
Good-bye, old world—good-bye !

A NEST OF HEPATICAS

O PASSION of the coming of the spring !
When the light love has captured everything,
When all the winter of the year's dry prose
Is rhymed to rapture, rhythmed to the rose,
When all the heart's desire is fondly set
Just to remember never to forget :
O season of the mild and misty eves,
With the deep sky seen through the growing
leaves !
Where in the crocus west the evening star
Grows distant from the moon, and sinks afar
As she grows lovelier ; when the willow
wands
Burst their brown buds in grey and gleaming
bands
And score the surface of the amber pool
With little motes of silver beautiful ;
When the hepatica, with her flushing crest,
Blooms in the leaves above the secret nest,

A Nest of Hepaticas

Where all her sisters, fairer far than she,
Lie curled in a frail silken galaxy ;
Like a young girl's first, timid thought of
love

That blossoms in her liquid eyes, above
A nest of hopes so secret and so fair,
She hardly knows herself that they are there.

SONG

CREEP into my heart, creep in, creep in,
Afar from the fret, the toil, and the din,
Where the spring of life for ever flows,
As clear as light and as sweet as the rose ;
(Creep into my heart,)
Where the dreams never wilt, but their tints
refine,
Rooted in beautiful thoughts of thine ;
Where morn falls cool on the soul, like sleep,
And the nights are tranquil and tranced and
deep ;
Where the fairest thing of all the fair
Thou art, who hast somehow crept in there,
Deep into my heart,
Deep into my heart.



THE END OF THE DAY

I HEAR the bells at eventide
Peal slowly one by one,
Near and far off they break and glide,
Across the stream float faintly beautiful
The antiphonal bells of Hull ;
The day is done, done, done,
 The day is done.

The dew has gathered in the flowers,
Like tears from some unconscious deep ;
The swallows whirl around the towers,
The light runs out beyond the long cloud
bars,
And leaves the single ^{*} stars ;
'Tis time for sleep, sleep, sleep,
 'Tis time for sleep.

The End of the Day

The hermit thrush begins again—
Timorous eremite—
That song of risen tears and pain,
As if the one he loved was far away ;
“ Alas ! another day—
And now good-night, good-night,
Good-night.”

THE LAURENTIANS

THESE mountains reign alone, they do not
share

The transitory life of woods and streams ;
Wrapt in the deep solemnity of dreams,
They drain the sunshine of the upper air.
Beneath their peaks the huge clouds here
and there

Take counsel of the wind, which all night
screams

Through grey, burnt forests where the
moonlight beams

On hidden lakes, and rocks worn smooth and
bare.

These mountains once, throned in some
primal sea,
Shook half the world with thunder, and
the sun

The Laurentians

Pierced not the gloom that clung about
their crest ;
Now with sealed lips, toilers from toil set
free,
Unvexed by fate, the part they played
being done,
They watch and wait in venerable rest.

IN THE WOODS

THIS is God's house—the blue sky is the ceiling,
This wood the soft green carpet for His feet,
Those hills His stairs, down which the brooks come stealing
With baby laughter, making earth more sweet.

And here His friends come, clouds, and soft winds sighing,
And little birds whose throats pour forth their love,
And spring and summer, and the white snow lying
Pencilled with shadows of bare boughs above.

In the Woods

And here come sunbeams through the green
leaves straying,
And shadows from the storm-clouds over-
drawn,
And warm, hushed nights, when Mother
Earth is praying
So late that her moon-candle burns till
dawn.

Sweet house of God, sweet earth, so full of
pleasure,
I enter at thy gates in storm or calm ;
And every sunbeam is a joy or pleasure,
And every cloud a solace and a balm.

THE CRIPPLE

I MET once, in a country lane,
A little cripple, pale and thin,
Who from my presence sought again
The shadows she had hidden in.

Her wasted cheeks the sunset skies
Had hallowed with their fading glow ;
And in her large and lustrous eyes
There dwelt a child's unuttered woe.

She crept into the autumn wood,
The parted bushes closed behind ;
Poor little heart ! I understood
The shameless shame that filled her mind.

I understood, and loved her well
For one sad face I loved of yore ;
And down the lane the dead leaves fell,
Like dreams that pass for evermore.

THE RIVER

WHY hurry, little river ?

Why hurry to the sea ?

There is nothing there to do
But to sink into the blue
And all forgotten be.

There is nothing on that shore
But the tides for evermore,
And the faint and far-off line
Where the winds across the brine
For ever, ever roam
And never find a home.

Why hurry, little river,

From the mountains and the mead,
Where the graceful elms are sleeping
And the quiet cattle feed ?
The loving shadows cool
The deep and restful pool,

The River

And every tribute stream
Brings its own sweet woodland dream
Of the mighty woods that sleep
Where the sighs of earth are deep,
And the silent skies look down
On the savage mountain's frown.

Oh, linger, little river !
Your banks are all so fair,
Each morning is a hymn of praise,
Each evening is a prayer.
All day the sunbeams glitter
On your shallows and your bars,
And at night the dear God stills you
With the music of the stars.

MY LITTLE SON

My little son, my little son, he calls to me
for ever

Across the gulfs and through the mists
which shroud him from my sight ;
I hear him in the noonday, in the midst of
all the turmoil ;
I hear him, oh ! so plainly, in the silence
of the night.

My little son, my little son, I see in clearest
vision

The merry face, the deep, clear eyes, the
crown of golden hair.

But these—ah ! these are sleeping where the
hillside glows with sunset,
And the little boy, my darling that I loved
so, is not there.

My Little Son

My little son, my little son, there are starry
paths at night-time
Above the swaying tree-tops where the
birds are fast asleep ;
Does he wander up and down them with the
winds in endless play-time ?
Does he read in sudden manhood all the
wonders of the deep ?

My little son, my little son, he hovers ever
near me
I meet him in the garden walks, he speaks
in wind and rain ;
He comes and nestles by me on my pillow
in the darkness,
Till the golden hands of sunrise draw
him back to God again.

UNFORGOTTEN

I know a garden where the lilies gleam,
And one who lingers in the sunshine there ;
She is than white-stoled lily far more fair,
And oh ! her eyes are heaven-lit with dream.

I know a garret, cold and dark and drear,
And one who toils and toils with tireless
pen,
Until his brave, sad eyes grow weary—then
He seeks the stars, pale, silent as a seer.

And ah ! it's strange, for, desolate and dim,
Between these two there rolls an ocean
wide ;
Yet he is in the garden by her side,
And she is in the garret there with him.

MY MADONNA

I HAILED me a woman from the street,
Shameless, but, oh, so fair !
I bade her sit in the model's seat,
And I painted her sitting there.

I hid all trace of her heart unclean ;
I painted a babe at her breast ;
I painted her as she might have been,
If the Worst had been the Best.

She laughed at my picture, and went away.
Then came, with a knowing nod,
A connoisseur, and I heard him say,
“ ‘Tis Mary, the Mother of God.”

So I painted a halo round her hair,
And I sold her and took my fee,
And she hangs in the church of Saint Hilaire
Where you and all may see.

NORTHERN PINES

I PASS where the pines for Christmas
Stand thick in the crowded street,
Where the groves of Dream and Silence
Are paced by feverish feet.

And far through the rain and the street-
cries
My homesick heart goes forth
To the pine-clad hills of childhood,
To the dark and tender North.

And I see the glooming pine-lands,
And I thrill to the Northland cold,
Where the sunset falls in silence
On the hills of gloom and gold !

And the still dusk woods close round me,
And I know the waiting eyes
Of my North, as a child's, are tender,
As a sorrowing mother's, wise !

THE WORDLESS TOUCH

THE sun on autumn hills, a twilight sea,
The touch of western gold on paling wings,
Soft rain by night, the flute of early birds,
And wind-tost children voices—these to me
Wake thoughts that sleep beyond the
bourne of words,
Yet whisper low, “ Whatever Life may be,
Mocked as it seemed by vague remem-
berings,
Thou, thou hast lived before, and known
these things ! ”

ON A CHILD'S PORTRAIT

DEEP in the fluted hollow of its shells
Dimly some echo of the ocean dwells.

Still in September's fruitage, mellow-cored,
The filtered sweets of golden noons are
stored.

And shimmering on a blue-bird's migrant
wings
Some poignant touch of June's lost azurc
clings.

Still in the rustling sheaf to-day there gleams
The lingering gold of April's vanished
dreams.

On a Child's Portrait

Still in the cell of one autumnal bee
I find lost summer in epitome.

And all that better life that I would lead,
Writ small in this, one childish face, I read.

NON OMNIS MORIAR

IN the teeth of the Word that bars my track,
 In the swirl of the Ebb that sucks me down,
IN the face of the storm that flings me back
 On the wrath of a Deep grown mountain-
 ous-walled,
I, I, tide by tide, and tack by tack,
 As far as the chains will let me free—
I threading a course unbuoyed and black,
 And feeling the Night where fanged rocks
 frown,
Ere the last spar sail, shall have somehow
 crawled
To that Port whence shone no light for
 me ;
Where, wrecked, if you will, but unappalled,
 I shall know I am stronger than my Sea !

THE FINAL LESSON

I HAVE sought beauty through the dust of
strife,
I have sought meaning for the ancient
ache,
And music in the grinding wheels of life ;
Long have I sought, and little found as yet
Beyond this truth : that Love alone can
make
Earth beautiful, and life without regret !

CHILDREN IN THE CITY

THOUSANDS of childish ears, rough chidden,
Never a sweet bird-note have heard ;
Deep in the leafy woodland hidden
Dies, unlistened to, many a bird.
For small soiled hands in the sordid city
Blossoms open and die unbreathed ;
For feet unwashed by the tears of pity
Streams around meadows of green are
wreathed.

Warm, unrevelled in, still they wander,
Summer breezes out in the fields ;
Scarcely noticed, the green months squander
All the wealth that the summer yields.
Ah, the pain of it ! ah, the pity !
Opulent stretch the country skies
Over solitudes, while in the city
Starving for beauty are childish eyes.

IN THE GRASS

FACE downward on the grass in reverie,
I found how cool and sweet
Are the green blooms that often thoughtlessly
I tread beneath my feet.

In this strange mimic wood where grasses
lean—

Elf trees untouched of bark—
I heard the hum of insects, saw the sheen
Of sunlight framing dark,

And felt with thoughts I cannot understand
And know not how to speak,
A daisy reaching up its little hand
To lay it on my cheek.

THE SUN IN THE WOODS

THE sun within the leafy woods
Is like a midday moon,
So soft upon these solitudes
Is bent the face of noon.

Loosed from the outside summer blaze
A few gold arrows stray ;
A vagrant brilliance droops or plays
Through all the dusky day.

The grey trunk feels a touch of light,
While, where dead leaves are deep,
A gleam of sunshine, golden white,
Lies like a soul asleep.

And just beyond dank-rooted ferns,
Where darkening hemlocks sigh,
And leaves are dim, the bare road burns
Beneath a dazzling sky.

MOONLIGHT

WHEN I see the ghost of night
Stealing through my window-pane,
Silken sleep and silver light
Struggle for my soul in vain ;
Silken sleep all balmily
Breathes upon my lids oppressed,
Till I sudden start to see
Ghostly fingers on my breast.

White and skyey visitant,
Bringing beauty such as stings
All my inner soul to pant
After undiscovered things,
Spare me this consummate pain !
Silken weavings intercreep
Round my senses once again,
I am mortal—let me sleep

